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17. ABSTRACT (MAX. 250 WORDS)

Children from socially and economically impoverished circumstances tend to enter school with perceptibly different preparation for the rigors and demands of the learning and socializing expectations of the school. Initial failures are almost inevitable. One of the goals of this proposal is to develop a positive readiness toward learning and to help the children overcome environmental deficiences. It also seeks to increase parental skills and understanding of the values of education. The program involves preschool children and their parents.

The program will operate for two school years in three centers and will involve children for one year before their entrance into kindergarten. Parents should assure children's attendance and be willing to cooperate. A planned parent education program is an important part of the preschool program. The emphasis will be on how parents and the school can work together. Teachers will have frequent discussions with parents, and will make home visits. Parents will visit the school and help on class trips. In addition, evening meetings held twice a month will discuss topics such as child development and advice to parents on ways to help children succeed in school.

The curriculum will emphasize language development, development of all sensory modalities, involvement and reinforcement. The proposed daily schedule includes activities for physical, manipulative language and concept development, and creative arts and science. The research proposal is a design for evaluating the program. Experimental and control groups will be selected, and repeated measurements will be made throughout the five year longitudinal study.

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OAKLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS
INTERAGENCY PROJECT

PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

I. OBSERVATION

Those wishing to observe the preschool program in progress should contact the Interagency office (TE 6-2622, extension 730) for an appointment.

Upon receiving the appointment and on the day of your visit the following should be observed:

A. Check in main office at the school before going to preschool room.

B. Enter room, sit away from activity.

C. Talk with teacher only if she is available.

D. Do not interact with children.

E. Feel free to move position of chair quietly.

F. Do not talk aloud.

G. If child asks what you are doing say, "writing."

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II. PROGRAM SUMMARY

A. Introduction

Children from socially and economically impoverished circumstances tend to enter school with perceptably different preparation for the rigors and demands of the learning and socializing expectations of the school. The fact of impoverished environment and the effect on school performance is well known. Among these children there is a high proportion of school failure, school dropout, reading and language disabilities, as well as life adjustment problems.

"It must be pointed out that the relationship between social background and school performance is not a simple one. Rather, evidence which is accumulating points more and more to the influence of background variables on the patterns of perceptual, language and cognitive development of the child and the subsequent diffusion of the effects of such patterns into all areas of the child's academic and psychological performance. To understand these effects requires delineating underlying skills in which these children are not sufficiently proficient."*

There are children who enter the school situation so poorly prepared to produce what the school and the community demand that initial failures are almost inevitable, and the school experience becomes negatively rather than positively reinforced. The underlying assumption for this project is that early intervention by well-structured programs will significantly reduce the negative influence of the socially marginal environment.

B. Goals

One of the goals of this proposal is to develop among disadvantaged preschool children a positive readiness toward learning, and to help them overcome their environmental deficiencies with which most of them enter kindergarten. The children will be chosen from selected elementary school attendance areas producing a large number of children with educational deficiencies in the kindergarten and primary grades (grades one, two and three). A second goal of the program is to tie closely to that of the elementary school. This has fundamental implications for the existing curriculum of the K-3 circuit particularly.

The proposal also seeks to increase parental skills and understanding of the values of education and thus to increase their ability to help better with the education of their children.

To accomplish these goals the Oakland Public Schools proposes to conduct a program involving preschool children and their parents.

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* Martin Deutsch, Ph.D., Codirector, Institute for Developmental Studies, New York Medical College

C. Organization

1. Planning

a. An extensive review has been made of the literature and of the experiences of other communities such as New Haven, Nashville, Baltimore and New York City. Programs in the latter two cities have been visited by the Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Schools and the Interagency School Project Director.

b. Use has been made of the experience gained in the child care center program of the Interagency School Project.

c. Three experienced and highly competent members of the Oakland Public Schools staff have been involved in planning the curriculum for the program.

d. Several conferences with respect to implementation have taken place involving school principals, central office personnel in the elementary school division, the Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Stuart S. Phillips, and the Director of the Interagency School Project.

2. Structure

a. The program will operate for two school years.

b. There are three centers located in different areas of the city.

c. Children will be involved in the program for the one year prior to their entrance into kindergarten (i.e., children aged three years-nine months to four years-nine months as of September). The centers are located at the school where children will attend kindergarten and will be under the direction of the building principal.

d. Each of the centers will have a morning and an afternoon group which meets four days a week. There are 20 children in each group. This allows a total of 120 children to be enrolled. One day each week (Monday) is set aside for staff planning, in-service and parent visitations and conferences.

3. Personnel

There is a full-time position of field teacher in the program, plus a half-time field assistant.

A certificated teacher is in charge of the program at each center. Working with each teacher will be six parents (18 total) indigenous to the neighborhood. Each of these parent aides will be employed for three hours a day providing a team of three parent aides for each group of 20 children.

The field teacher will be the field director of the Project. This position will be under the direction of the Interagency School Project office.

4. Administration

a. The project will be administered by the Coordinator of the Interagency School Project in cooperation with the elementary division of the school district.

5. Selection of Children

The selection of the children will be governed by the following criteria:

a. three years-nine months to four years-nine months in age as of September, 1964.

b. toilet trained

c. assurance of regular attendance

d. voluntary cooperation of parent

e. reasonable assurance from parent that child will remain in area for at least one year and preferably two.

6. Adult Education

a. A planned parent education program is an important part of the preschool program. The emphasis will be on <u>How Parents and the School Can Work Together</u> to better prepare children for public school and how parents can help children acquire the necessary skills for school success.

Preschool Program

6. continued

b. Incidental Parent Contacts

(1) frequent discussion with teachers

(2) home visits by teachers

(3) individual conferences

(4) parent's visitation - planned and unplanned

(5) parents help in pre-planning and accompanying preschool class on trips.

c. Evening Meetings

(1) twice a month

(2) topics for discussion to include such as

(a) nutrition

(b) guidance

(c) discipline

(d) language development - library use

(e) child development

(f) standards of behavior

(g) harmonize home standards and school standards

(h) available resources for trips, excursions, etc.

(i) ways parents and children help each other

(j) ways to help child succeed in school

(k) T.V. programs - selection, evaluation, follow up and reinforcement.

D. Curriculum

The purpose of this preschool program is to provide an enriched environment for disadvantaged children which will prepare them for school success and develop their physical, mental and emotional well being. This will be accomplished through emphasis upon:

1. Language development

2. Development of all sensory modalities. Attention will be given to special training sequences to help the child create some mental order out of the confusions of his environment.

3. Involvement. Enriching experiences through self-selected developmental activities of a Montesorri nature, audio-visual materials, excursions, photographs and movies of the children, library.

4. Reinforcement

   (a) repetition of self-selected activities

   (b) overlapping of approaches toward one skill

   (c) building child's confidence and self-image by working through his strengths in order to overcome his weaknesses.

E. Daily Schedule

8:45 - 9:15 Routines, and health check as children arrive
or
12:30 - 1:00 Self-selected developmental activities for manipulative, language and concept development

Puzzles
Magnetic board
Flannel board
Hammer-nail set
Tracing shapes
Using pencil and blackboard
Playhouse and telephone
Small blocks
Matching and categorizing games

E. continued

9:15 - 9:25 Greetings (music, discussion, etc.)
or
1:00 - 1:10

9:25 - 9:50 Language Development (lesson plans in preparation)
or
1:10 - 1:35
(quiet)

9:50 -10:20 Snack (manners, health)
(semi-active) Story Groups, music or finger plays

10:20 -10:50 Physical Development (outside when possible)
or
1:35 - 2:05
(active)
Floor toys
Large blocks
Climbing toys
Balls
Sandbox
Outdoor painting
Directed games and rhythms

2:05 - 2:35 Snack (manners, health)
(semi-active) Story Groups, music or finger plays

10:50 -11:30 Creative Arts and/or Science
or
2:35 - 3:05
(quiet)
Trip planning
Library visits

F. Research Proposal

The research proposal presented herein is a design for evaluating the Interagency Preschool Project carried on during the 1964-65 school year.

Pupils in experimental and control groups will be selected by random assignment. Repeated measurements will be made on each of the groups throughout the five-year longitudinal study. The instruments and schedule for evaluation of experimental and control pupils will be as follows:

F. continued

Fall, 1964 - Preschool

Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test
Perceptual Forms Test (Florida)
Vineland Social Maturity Scale
OPS Vocabulary Test
Teacher Rating
Family Background Questionnaire (experimentals only)

May 1965 - Preschool

Teacher Rating

February 1966 - Kindergarten

Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test
Perceptual Forms Test (Florida)
Vineland Social Maturity Scale
OPS Vocabulary Test

May 1966 - Kindergarten

Kindergarten Teacher Ratings of Prognosis in Reading

October 1966 - Grade One

Reading Readiness Test

May 1968 - Grade Two

Stanford Reading Test

May 1969 - Grade Three

Kuhlmann-Anderson Intelligence Scale
Stanford Achievement Battery

Means, standard deviations, and correlations will be computed for each group on each measure obtained. Tests of significance will be applied to determine possible gains or differences in performance which may have relationships to the particular programs in which the pupils were enrolled. The longitudinal study and testing throughout the five-year period will make it possible to observe when such performance differences may become apparent.

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